



**TOWN OF UXBRIDGE  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
Town Hall Room 102  
21 South Main Street  
Uxbridge, MA 01569-1851  
508-278-8600 Fax 508-278-8605  
[town.manager@uxbridge-ma.gov](mailto:town.manager@uxbridge-ma.gov)

**Jill R. Myers**  
Town Manager

TO: Honorable Board of Selectmen

FROM: Jill R. Myers, Town Manager

DATE: April 23, 2008

SUBJECT: Town Manager's Report for the BOS Meeting of April 28, 2008

**Cable Show – 21 S. Main Street:** I began taping segments with Department Heads reviewing the warrant articles and will continue through next week reviewing the FY09 budget.

**FY09 Budget:**

The updated Town Manager's budget recommendations (from the budget submitted on 2/29/08) is included in the BOS meeting agenda package and scheduled for discussion on 4/28/08 - which does not fund the operating budget with one-time revenues or use of stabilization. It was a very difficult task resulting in a reduction of services for a few years until the structural deficit is addressed, but in an effort to bring the Town into financial health and maintain our bond rating. The materials will be uploaded to the Town's website, and distributed to the various Town buildings for viewing. FY10 will be even more difficult than FY09. FinComm meetings are continuing on Tuesday/Thursdays with its recommendations anticipated for 5/5. I will also attend the meeting of the Library Board of Trustees on 4/29 to discuss the FY09 budget which has been amended to avoid requesting a financial waiver (last waiver received was in FY04 for one year). The discussion will seek to expand revenue generating opportunities and offsets for FY09, and priorities for FY10 as it relates/impacts the municipal budget.

**Spring Annual Town Meeting – 5/13/08:**

Vice Chairman Potaski, DPW Supt. Bombara, and I met with Jill Kenrick to review parcel maps, plans on file, and deeds relating to the Cnossen well field property proposed acquisition under Article 17. Historical information was provided and shared, and it was a productive exchange of information. There is no need to amend the article and the map and parcels are correct.

I have scheduled a meeting with the Moderator and Town Counsel to review the Town Meeting proceedings. The Moderator also suggested a meeting with the BOS, FinComm, and School Committee be held the week before Town Meeting to go over the agenda/warrant, and conduct of Town Meeting. A date is to be determined.

**Citizen Petitions – Processing of Signatures**

Town Counsel Patrick Costello provided the following comments:

*4/3/08: I believe the Town has complied with the letter of G.L. c.39, s.10. If the text of the proposed Article was clearly "attached" to the petition form, I believe that a reasonable presumption would follow that this is the language approved by the petitioners. The Clerk or Selectmen could challenge this presumption if they deem the circumstances of the petition to be suspicious, but, they would then have to establish sufficient facts to overcome the presumption of validity. If we refuse to insert such a petitioned article on the warrant for insufficient reason, we run the risk of legal action by the petitioners or the A.G. I'm not aware of any case law or regulation addressing this specific issue. If the Town, by Bylaw or Charter provision wanted to "tighten" the petition procedure by specifically requiring the proposed article to be typed or printed directly on the Form issued by the Town Clerk, I don't see why we couldn't adopt such measures. Absent such a requirement, however, I'd be hesitant to challenge the subject petitions on the facts you noted.*

*4/16/08: I don't believe the initiative petition process referenced in the material provided by Ms. Boatman is applicable to Town Meeting Zoning Bylaw amendments, generally, or Article 27 of our ATM Warrant, in particular. Petitions for inclusion of warrant articles for zoning bylaw amendments are governed by the provisions of G.L. c.39, §10 and our Bylaws. The selectmen must incorporate properly petitioned articles into the Warrant under §10.*

Town Counsel will be present at the BOS meeting on 4/28/08.

**Veterans Monument Town Common – Vote of Uxbridge Historical Commission on 4/16:**

We received correspondence that the Commission voted unanimously to allow placement of a Veterans Monument on the Common. However, they also voted unanimously to NOT allow any further placement of the monuments on the Town Common in the future.

**National Grid Interstate Reliability Project Meeting 4/10 (Report from the Director of Planning and Development DiPrete):**

National Grid's project is to remove an existing (but no longer utilized) "Lattice Tower" within their existing right of way, and construct a new, steel "H Tower" in its place. The new H Tower would carry a new 345kV line (the old lattice towers used to carry a 69 kV line). The corridor affected runs essentially from the NW corner of Town (shown on our zoning map coming into town across Lackey Dam Road) to the SE corner (shown on that map as leaving town essentially behind McDonald's). The corridor roughly parallels Route 146. It does go through the Town-owned "Lavallee" property, and crosses the Blackstone just south of the well field. The project is intended to increase capacity, and cross-connections, so as to improve reliability within the New England region. NG anticipates local permitting to begin later this year. Conservation Commission (wetland) permitting will certainly be required; a variance from the height regulations may also be required. The entire ROW will likely be cleared of all vegetation prior to construction. The corridor lies very near to some population centers – for example, it is adjacent to the Summerfield at Taft Hill project, and Ledgemere Estates.

National Grid indicated that the EMF's from these wires essentially disappear within 150 to 300 feet. (This is consistent with "planning" practice). It is noteworthy, however, that the existing and proposed towers are on the westerly "edge" of the existing ROW, and that the entire ROW is reported by National Grid as being less than 300 feet wide (so the new lines will be on the far side of Ledgemere, but very close to Summerfield structures). NG represented that they will design the system to "cancel out" the emf's whenever possible. However, that depends in part

on which direction the energy is traveling in, and that of course may change over time depending on where the demands are.

National Grid indicated that part of the project includes installation of guardrails and gates, and posting of signage to discourage ATV use. During discussion, NG indicated that their public forums may include some information regarding property ownership (and easement) rights so as to help clarify those issues relative to official (and unlawful) access to the “power lines.”

#### **Downtown Vision and Master Plan Update (last meeting of 4/17):**

Following the Bernat Mill’s devastation last summer, town officials worked closely with a number of state and federal offices to assess the impact of the fire on the town. In addition to the emergency and fire response services, the Mill Fire severely impacted what had become an economic development engine promoting truly small business and entrepreneurship fostered by the Bernat Mill owners. In particular, the Lieutenant Governor office and Senator Kerry were integral to our efforts locally to identify how to move forward. This effort to develop a Downtown Vision and Master Plan is a first step to that process.

MassDevelopment, a quasi-state agency whose main focus is to help ensure economically viable and sustainable communities throughout the Commonwealth provided the Town with a \$25,000 grant of services, providing a consultant to lead us through this exercise as a critical step to our economic development. The Cecil Group is our consultant partner, and is represented by Ken Buckland and Katie Stebbins.

The Uxbridge downtown was historically an active and dynamic center of commerce. It still serves as a critical junction in the transportation corridors where State Routes 122 and 16 link Uxbridge and the entire Blackstone Valley to all points north, south, east and west. The rail line represents potential opportunities and also challenges. The Mumford River provides development constraints as well as recreational and economic opportunities. And the redevelopment of the Bernat Mill and also nearby Stanley Woolen Mill will impact, and also be impacted by, other actions within and affecting the downtown area.

The current project is being driven by a handful of volunteers who have committed themselves to the planning project, and also have committed themselves to continuing to drive the implementation of various recommendations that grow from this public input and visioning experience. They include Mike Cove, Barry Desruisseaux, Cappy Fournier, Faye McCloskey, Rob Paul, Louise Redding and Mark Wickstrom.

Previous public input resulted in a clear delineation of the “downtown” and provided an opportunity to identify important resources, opportunities and constraints. The dialogue has been lively and productive. As result, the recommendations contained in the Draft Report are dynamic, and suggest actions that will involve local government, downtown properties and the general public. Some recommendations can be accomplished relatively easily and quickly, and others are much longer-term, and may require significant funding (perhaps through a well-conceived grant process). The consultant is preparing the final plan. Once this plan is finalized, we will use it as a guidebook for continuing to move forward with downtown revitalization. It is not intended to sit on a shelf, but to be an often-used reference tool for maintaining energy and forward movement.

#### **Other:**

- FY07 Town Report: We expect to receive the report from the printer on 5/1. We also have it as a PDF link on the website – [www.uxbridge-ma.gov](http://www.uxbridge-ma.gov).
- Cable Advisory Committee meeting: we have three members, and held the first meeting on 4/16. Rick Nedder is the Chairman. Their next meeting is scheduled for 5/28.
- Recruitment: Conservation Administrator. We conducted interviews with three candidates on 4/18. The interview panel included the Chairman of ConComm, Director of Planning and Development, and me. We have consensus on a top candidate and working to check references and make a final offer. I attended the ConComm meeting of 4/22 to hear the open space plan information and provide a status on the recruitment.
- Growth Management Bylaw (*Follow-up to BOS inquiry of 4/14*): It is effective through June 30, 2009. It has not been invoked. The GM Bylaw limits the number of new dwelling units per year to 60. Several projects, including for example the Summerfield project, are exempt.
- Appointment – Steven O’Connell as an Associate member of the ZBA.
- Fire Union Negotiations: Negotiations concluded within three meetings and a draft MOA will be presented in Executive Session. The Teachers’ (UTA) Negotiations were cancelled on 4/17; the next meeting is 5/1.
- Resignation: Tracy Leavitt - Part-time, Administrative Assistant to the BOS and Town Manager has tendered her resignation. She accepted a position with the Town of Millis and her last day will be April 30<sup>th</sup>. She will be missed.
- Regional Economic Development Initiative Meeting – 4/30 at BVT, 7pm. It is expected that representation from 11 Towns will be present.